United Nations A/56/PV.30

General Assembly

Fifty-sixth session

Official Records

30th plenary meeting
Monday, 22 October 2001, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Han Seung-soo ..... (Republic of Korea)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Sharma (Nepal), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 14

Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Agency (A/56/313)

The Acting President: I invite the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, to present the report of the Agency for the year 2000.

Mr. ElBaradei: The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) continues to play an important role as a catalyst for development and as a cornerstone for nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear safety.

I will speak briefly today about the IAEA's activities in terms of our three fundamental functions: to bring about the development and transfer of peaceful nuclear technologies, to build and maintain a global nuclear safety regime, and to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and ensure the security of nuclear material and facilities.

I will begin with a subject to which the Agency has been devoting much attention in recent weeks — namely, the enhancement of our efforts to protect against nuclear terrorism.

The Agency has been at the forefront of encouraging States to make security an integral part of the management of their overall nuclear programmes; however, the attacks in the United States were a wake-up call to us all that more can and must be done. In the week immediately following the tragedy, the IAEA General Conference adopted a resolution that requested that I initiate a thorough review of Agency activities and programmes relevant to preventing acts of terrorism involving nuclear and other radioactive materials.

The Agency is engaged in a variety of activities relevant to combating nuclear terrorism, including programmes to ensure physical security, to help prevent and respond to illicit trafficking of nuclear material and other radioactive sources, to promote the safety of nuclear facilities, to safeguard nuclear material against non-peaceful uses and to respond to emergencies. In all these areas of activity, the Agency develops legal norms and guidelines, promotes international cooperation, provides expert advice, training and equipment and provides varying degrees of oversight. In the past few years, we have focused on increasing nuclear security cooperation among relevant organizations, including customs organizations, Interpol and other law enforcement organizations, national Governments and the Agency. We also have provided an expanding array of advisory services to States to assist them in upgrading nuclear safety, protecting nuclear material and facilities against theft and sabotage and managing and disposing of radioactive sources safely. We have also strengthened

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

01-59285 (E)

our verification system to cover both declared and possible undeclared activities.

We are reviewing in depth each of the programmes I just mentioned to identify additional measures that need to be taken in the light of recent events. In particular, we are considering expanding the scope and reach of many of our security and safety services. Equally, we will review existing conventions and guidelines — including the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material — to ensure that they are comprehensive and effective, and we will make every effort to ensure that they are universally applied.

To enable the Agency to assist States that lack the resources to upgrade their security systems, we are also exploring the feasibility of establishing a fund for protection against nuclear terrorism. I trust that, in the light of the current threats, the development of an effective global system for protection against nuclear theft, sabotage and terrorism will be given the priority it deserves by all concerned. These are unconventional threats that require unconventional responses.

I will turn now to other Agency activities.

The rapid expansion in global energy demand — and the growing awareness of the need for sustainable development — has put increasing focus on the environmental consequences of burning fossil fuels. Nuclear power, which currently supplies about one sixth of global electricity, is the principal alternative that can in the foreseeable future provide electricity on a large scale with practically no greenhouse gas emissions.

The past 12 months have seen some positive developments for nuclear power. In terms of performance, we have continued to see strong safety practices, reduced generating costs and the first extensions of power plant licences to 60 years. Six new plants were connected to national electricity grids in the year 2000, and 33 more were under construction by the end of the year. Views on the future of nuclear power, however, are still mixed because of safety and non-proliferation concerns. For example, the United States Government's new energy policy gave an explicit endorsement to nuclear expansion, whereas the German Government concluded an agreement with the industry to phase out nuclear power. This mixed outlook has also been reflected in the conclusions reached on the role of nuclear power at major conferences on climate change and sustainable development.

It may be too early to forecast how the future will unfold for nuclear power. Clearly there is a new, substantive debate on the role of nuclear power and a recognition in many quarters that its merits as a source of clean energy cannot simply be ignored. Three crucial questions, however, will determine the future of nuclear power: whether it will continue to prove itself a safe technology; whether it can be effectively safeguarded against non-peaceful purposes; and whether it can be an economically competitive technology.

These questions are among the subjects for review by the Agency's newly established International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO), a project designed to support the safe, economical and proliferation-resistant use of nuclear energy to assist in meeting the global energy needs of the twenty-first century. For the nuclear option to remain viable, it is important that nuclear power technology, like other technologies, be enterprising and innovative.

Nuclear technologies provide preferred solutions — and sometimes the only solutions — to many economic and social problems. A major portion of our nuclear technology activities, therefore, concerns applications other than electricity generation. Through both its coordinated research projects and its technical cooperation programme, the Agency works to strengthen the scientific and technological capacities of its Member States and functions as a vehicle for the transfer of nuclear technologies to combat disease and child malnutrition, to manage water resources, to increase food production and to protect the environment.

For example, in the area of human health, radiotherapy has long been recognized as a valuable tool in both the cure and palliation of cancer. Agency attention to this issue in developing countries is becoming increasingly important, as life expectancies increase and cancer rates go up. The Agency seeks to build up indigenous capabilities by training practitioners, improving the quality of therapy equipment, and increasing treatment quality and effectiveness.

In the area of water management, nuclear techniques are gaining increasing recognition. Isotope

hydrology is being used to plot groundwater aquifers for sustainable water resource management, with 75 active Agency projects in some 40 Member States. In Ethiopia, for example, the use of isotope hydrology under an Agency project helped to tap a new groundwater field to provide more than 40 per cent of Addis Ababa's water supply. We are also joining with the Organization of American States, the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility to protect and manage the Guarani Aquifer — the largest groundwater aquifer in South America, with enough freshwater, if protected in a sustainable manner, to supply the needs of over 300 million people.

Agricultural yield and livestock production continue to be enhanced by the expanding application of the proven sterile insect technique (SIT), an environmentally friendly alternative to insecticides. At their July 2001 summit in Lusaka, the African heads of State and Government approved a plan for the Pan-African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign through the use of SIT, which will be supported by, among others, the IAEA, the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization. The plan should result in significant health and economic benefits across the African continent. Radiation-induced mutations are also being used to produce crops with greater yield and higher quality, and irradiation of agricultural products is being employed to preserve freshness and eliminate disease-causing organisms.

In the area of environmental protection, our Marine Environment Laboratory in Monaco has been giving priority to the use of nuclear techniques for the sustainable management of coastal zones — the parts of the ocean closest to human use and needs. Progress is also being made on developing nuclear techniques for the detection of abandoned landmines — techniques that should be significantly less costly and labour-intensive than conventional techniques.

In each of these areas of nuclear application, the Agency seeks to promote the development and transfer of techniques that serve the priorities of its member States, with a focus on the special needs of developing countries. As we will report at the upcoming World Summit on Sustainable Development, of the more than $500 million worth of technical cooperation provided by the Agency since 1992, more than $200 million has gone to more than 800 projects that have specifically supported Agenda 21 priorities, such as land and agriculture, human health and fresh water.

Safety in nuclear activities around the globe is vital to the continued credibility of nuclear technologies. While safety is primarily a national responsibility, it is equally a legitimate international concern. Nuclear safety, like environmental practices, has implications that transcend national boundaries. Since the Chernobyl accident, safety performance has continued to show significant improvement, but much remains to be done at the national and international levels to address the remaining unevenness in safety practices in different countries.

The development and adoption of international legally binding norms under the auspices of the Agency has significantly contributed to the enhancement of nuclear safety worldwide. To date, conventions have been developed covering the safety of power reactors, radioactive waste and spent fuel management, early notification and assistance in case of a nuclear accident or radiological emergency, and the physical protection of nuclear material. However, many States are not yet party to these conventions; certain key areas of nuclear activity are still not subject to conventions; and some of the conventions that exist are not comprehensive in their coverage. I urge all States that have not already done so to become party to all safety-related conventions. In addition, I believe we should continue to consider the merits of establishing legally binding norms in areas not currently covered by conventions.

A second key Agency contribution to nuclear safety is the development and maintenance of a comprehensive body of safety standards. An increasing number of States use IAEA standards directly or as the reference basis for their national nuclear safety regulations. Over the past few years, the Agency secretariat has been working intensively to update and complete an overall corpus of safety standards that covers the entire range of nuclear activities, including waste and transport safety.

Safety standards can be effective, however, only if applied in practice. The Agency assists States in applying its standards by providing education and training, promoting information exchange on best safety practices and rendering a broad range of safety services. Agency safety services — such as our operational reactor safety assessments, design reviews and regulatory reviews — continue to be in high

demand. The benefits of these international peer reviews and other services are demonstrated by the increasing degree to which follow-up missions find that identified safety problems have been resolved. In the past year, we have begun to develop a more comprehensive approach — an integrated safety evaluation — that would provide a diagnostic of a given country's overall nuclear safety profile, tailored to the degree of complexity of the country's nuclear programme and identifying those areas where safety enhancements should be focused.

A major issue in the current debate regarding the role of nuclear power is the safe management and disposal of spent fuel and radioactive waste. Near-term waste concerns — specifically the disposal of low-level and short-lived waste and the storage of waste in all categories — are already being dealt with safely and effectively. However, the public at large remains sceptical about high-level waste management and disposal, despite the confidence among experts that geological disposal is safe, technically feasible and environmentally responsible.

Some progress is worthy of note. The Finnish Parliament in May ratified the Government's decision to construct a deep disposal facility for spent fuel at Olkiluoto. In the United States of America, a recommendation to the President on the proposed geological repository site at Yucca Mountain may be made in the coming months. And research continues on waste disposal methods that are reversible to allow later retrieval of the waste in case concerns arise or preferred solutions are developed, and on transmutation and other techniques to reduce the radioactivity and volume of long-lived waste. The Agency continues to focus international attention on waste-management issues in order to accelerate progress towards the demonstration of successful solutions, which is key to public acceptance.

This year marked the fifteenth anniversary of the Chernobyl accident. With Agency support, two international conferences in Kiev focused on consequences of the accident, including health, environmental and social impacts. In a recent visit to some of the affected areas in Belarus, I continued to observe the lack of trust that prevails among the people of the region, due in no small part to contradictory data and reports concerning the precise environmental and health impacts of the accident — contradictions that continue among national authorities as well as among the relevant international organizations. I believe that it would be helpful to establish a common forum on the consequences of Chernobyl in which the relevant United Nations organizations and the Governments of the affected countries would deliver a clear and unified message to the people of the region and the public at large. The Agency is currently exploring the feasibility of establishing such a forum.

Last November, the Agency participated in a field mission to Kosovo, led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), to assess possible consequences of the use of depleted uranium in ammunition during the Kosovo conflict. The mission report concluded that no widespread ground contamination was found in the investigated areas and, therefore, that the corresponding radiological and chemical risks are insignificant. Nonetheless, the report called for certain precautionary actions.

The Agency is still working to respond — with UNEP and the World Health Organization — to requests received from various States in the Middle East and the Balkans regarding additional radiological assessments of depleted uranium residues. A preliminary mission was completed in Kuwait in September; we are participating with UNEP in a mission to Yugoslavia next week; and other missions may follow as resources permit.

Clearly, a number of challenges remain in the area of nuclear safety. Among them is the need to continue to improve safety in areas where vulnerability is apparent and to cultivate a nuclear safety culture globally. This requires increased efforts for the international harmonization of safety standards and approaches and for the development of effective legislative and regulatory infrastructures in all countries.

The Agency's verification activities are designed to provide assurances that nuclear material and facilities are used exclusively for peaceful purposes. In the early 1990s, after the discovery of the clandestine nuclear-weapons programme in Iraq, the international community declared its readiness to give the Agency broader authority to strengthen its verification ability, particularly its ability to provide assurance not only that declared nuclear material has not been diverted for non-peaceful purposes, but, equally important, that no undeclared nuclear material or activities exist. Except in a limited number of countries, however, we still do

not have that authority, because such authority requires that, in every country in question, a safeguards agreement and an additional protocol be in force.

Fifty States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remain without a comprehensive safeguards agreement in force. For those countries, the Agency cannot provide any safeguards assurance. And since 1997, when the IAEA Board of Governors adopted the Model Additional Protocol, the Board has approved additional protocols for only 58 member States, and only 21 of those have entered into force. This is an unsatisfactory situation. The Agency can provide the required assurances only if we are given the corresponding authority.

For nearly three years, the Agency has not been in a position to implement its mandate in Iraq under Security Council resolution 687 (1991) and related resolutions. As a consequence, we cannot at present provide any assurance that Iraq is in compliance with its obligations under these resolutions. The Agency remains prepared to resume its verification activities in Iraq under the relevant Security Council resolutions at short notice.

A number of questions and concerns remain regarding Iraq's past nuclear programme, the clarification of which would reduce the uncertainty in the completeness of the Agency's knowledge of that programme. Provided that the Agency could satisfy itself that the status of Iraq's nuclear activities has not changed since December 1998, the uncertainties resulting from these questions and concerns would not prevent the Agency from moving to the full implementation of its ongoing monitoring and verification plan. Clearly, the longer the suspension of Security Council-mandated inspections lasts, the more difficult it will be and the more time it will take for the Agency to re-establish the level of knowledge that had been achieved at the end of 1998.

In January 2001, the Agency carried out a verification of the nuclear material remaining under safeguards, pursuant to Iraq's NPT safeguards agreement with the Agency. With the cooperation of the Iraqi authorities, Agency inspectors were able to verify the presence of this material. However, as I have stated before, these safeguards activities do not serve as a substitute for the verification activities required by the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, nor do they provide the needed assurances sought by the Council.

Since 1993, the Agency has been unable to fully implement its NPT safeguards agreement with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Pursuant to the Agreed Framework between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, however, since November 1994 the Agency has been monitoring the freeze of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's graphite-moderated nuclear reactor and related facilities. We have also maintained a continuous inspector presence at the Nyongbyong site.

The Agency continues to be unable to verify the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's declaration that all nuclear material subject to safeguards in the country has been declared to the Agency.

As I noted last year, this verification process will take three to four years. In May of this year, the Agency proposed to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea the first concrete steps that need to be carried out in that process and we indicated our readiness to start implementing these measures as soon as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea enables us to do so. We have not yet received a response from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which continues to link its acceptance of Agency verification of its declaration to the degree of progress in the implementation of the Agreed Framework. I continue to call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to normalize its relations with the Agency, including the resumption of its membership. This would not only make for better interaction in the verification field, but also enable us to provide important safety advice and expertise related to the ongoing light-water reactor project.

In keeping with my mandate from the Agency's General Conference, I have continued to consult with the States of the Middle East region on the application of full-scope safeguards to all nuclear activities in the Middle East and on the development of model agreements that would contribute to the eventual establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region. Regrettably, I have not yet been able to make progress in fulfilling this mandate. I do hope that future progress in the Middle East peace process will make it feasible to make parallel progress in this major security issue.

Within the framework of the initiative to submit nuclear material released from the military programmes of the Russian Federation and the United States for Agency verification, consultations have continued in an effort to resolve various legal and technical issues. In the past 12 months, progress has been made on developing technical criteria and methods for implementing verification measures. Agreement, however, has still to be reached on the scope of the verification measures, the nature of the material subject to verification and the duration of verification measures under the agreements. Last month, I met in Vienna with the Russian Federation Minister of Atomic Energy and the United States Secretary of Energy to take stock of progress and to give impetus to this important arms control initiative, which, if successful, would ensure that large amounts of weapon-usable material are irreversibly removed from those military programmes.

Stemming the spread of nuclear weapons and moving towards nuclear arms control and disarmament continue to be a major human aspiration. A number of challenges are critical to our future success. High among them is the universal application of the Agency's safeguards system through the conclusion of the relevant safeguards agreements and additional protocols by all States that have made non-proliferation commitments, and through the attainment of the universality of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. But a closely linked challenge is to make the needed tangible progress towards nuclear arms control and disarmament. This is crucial for sustaining and consolidating the non-proliferation regime in the long run. The unequivocal commitment by the nuclear-weapon States during the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to "accomplish the total elimination of nuclear weapons" (*NPT/CONF.2000/28 (Parts I and II), p. 14*) needs to be followed by concrete steps at an early date.

This review of some of the Agency's activities makes it clear that the scope of our work continues to expand. In the environment of zero-real-growth budgets, to which the Agency has been subjected for more than a decade, some of these priorities cannot be accommodated. The compromises achieved to date to resolve near-term budget issues should not be mistaken for long-term solutions. If the Agency is to fulfil its mandate while maintaining the required balance among its priority activities, we must find better ways to ensure adequate and predictable funding. We must also have the foresight, when planning our activities, to invest in preventive measures rather than simply responding to crises, when it is often too late and much more costly.

Over the past four years, we have initiated a programme of reform in the management of the Agency. Of particular importance has been our accelerated introduction of results-based programming and budgeting, accompanied by a transition to biennial programming and budgeting. Those changes have been facilitated by considerable restructuring within the secretariat and by a "one-house" approach to improving coordination and efficiency among our diverse programmes. Thus, while reform will remain an ongoing process, our basic machinery is now sharp and focused.

IAEA continues to play a key role in ensuring that the benefits of nuclear technology are shared globally, that peaceful nuclear activities are conducted safely, and that the international community is provided with a credible framework for curbing nuclear weapon proliferation and for ensuring the security of nuclear materials and facilities. Naturally, our ability to effectively perform those functions depends on the political commitment and financial support of our member States, which I trust will continue to be forthcoming.

Let me conclude by expressing my sincere appreciation to the Government of Austria, which has continued to be an exemplary and gracious host to the IAEA for more than four decades.

Mr. Prakash (India): The Indian delegation has taken note of the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), just presented by the Agency's Director General, Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei.

The Agency must be commended for bringing out a nuclear technology review, as it has for the past few years. The review cites studies conducted by prestigious organizations which indicate the necessity and indeed the inevitability of nuclear energy over the long term. Objective analyses of various energy scenarios clearly reveal that nuclear energy forms an important component of the energy mix and that it will be one of the principal sources of electricity in the future.

At present, of course, we are faced with an unusual situation. Many industrialized countries with nuclear-power technology capabilities are witnessing electricity demand saturation, while many developing countries, for one reason or another, are unable to access nuclear power. In sharp contrast to that global scenario, the situation in some Asian countries, especially India, is vastly different, since in those countries there is a growing energy demand matched by significant industrialization. These countries have acquired the necessary capability to pursue nuclear technology to meet their energy needs. If the global community wishes to bridge the energy divide to the maximum extent as a prerequisite for economic development, there is no alternative to large-scale utilization of nuclear energy. Several studies have confirmed that conclusion, but those studies are premised on the mistaken perception that developing countries are unable to access energy sources either due to lack of financial strength or due to psychological fear in the matter of nuclear power.

It is gratifying to note that the Commission on Sustainable Development has recognized the value of nuclear energy in the context of sustainable development and has agreed that the choice to use appropriate energy sources should be left to the countries concerned. The nuclear option, however, suffered a setback at the Bonn meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change when it was decided that developed countries were to refrain from using certified emission reductions generated from nuclear facilities to meet their commitments under the Kyoto Protocol to the Convention. It is ironic that an energy source that is devoid of the danger of greenhouse gas emissions should be discouraged by a body that is most concerned with the reduction of such emissions. We commend the IAEA secretariat for the role it played in New York and in Bonn, distributing fact sheets on nuclear power and sustainable development, organizing side events and presenting case studies, all of which made a considerable impact.

We should recognize the reality that nuclear power will play an increasingly important role in meeting the energy needs of the world. There is an imperative need to eliminate, through innovation and improvement, the remaining concerns about nuclear power generation. Thus, we need technological solutions not only to ensure economical generation of nuclear power but also to address questions of safety, sustainability, proliferation resistance and long-term waste management. We believe that there are several canons by way of technological solutions which would simultaneously address all those issues. The development of the advanced heavy water reactor in India is a step in the right direction. In that context, the initiative of IAEA to launch the International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles is highly laudable and worthy of strong support and participation. Such programmes, if well supported, would contribute to greater nuclear power generation as well as to enhancing safety with no fear of proliferation. We therefore strongly recommend better budgetary support to such programmes, which simultaneously address the long-term objectives of IAEA programmes in nuclear energy, nuclear safety and safeguards. For our part, we are actively participating in that vital programme, including by way of providing cost-free expertise. We hope it would be possible for this programme to be made a part of the regular budget of the Agency, with adequate support. We feel that this is the most cost-effective strategy that could meet the statutory mandate of the IAEA in the long run without losing the balance between the promotional and safeguards activities.

India's modest uranium resources have been a key determinant in the direction that our nuclear-power programme has taken. A closed nuclear-fuel cycle, which involves reprocessing and recycling of fissile materials, is central to our nuclear energy policy. Incidentally, this also facilitates a logical answer to the issue of long-term waste management. Since our thorium reserves are five to six times larger than our uranium reserves, thorium utilization for large-scale energy production is an important long-term goal of our nuclear-power programme.

In the year 2000, four 220 megawatt (MWe) pressurized heavy water reactor (PHWR) units commenced commercial operation in India, bringing our nuclear power capacity to 2,720 MWe from 14 operational units. India's nuclear power reactors are also a maintaining high-capacity factor of around 82 per cent. In the next 10 years it is envisaged that a total nuclear power capacity of about 10,000 MWe would be established. Our fast-breeder reactor programme is on course. The design of the 500 MWe sodium-cooled pool-type prototype fast-breeder reactor (PFBR) is nearing completion and we expect to be able to

commence construction of a PFBR soon. The detailed design and development of the uranium-233 and plutonium-fuelled advanced heavy-water reactor (AHWR) continued at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC). Research and development in fusion technology continues.

Self-reliance continues to be the guiding principle of our nuclear programme, which is now firmly in place, and will continue to grow on the basis of indigenous capabilities. However, to increase the share of nuclear power rapidly, the import of light-water-reactor (LWR) technology has been envisaged. We are now in the process of setting up two 1000 MWe VVER pressurized-water reactors in collaboration with the Russian Federation. Consistent with our policy, these reactors will also be placed under the facility-specific safeguards of the IAEA. The same would apply to other similar plants established through imports in the future.

While nuclear power is a major component of our research-and-development activities, we continues to lay emphasis on applied research in the use of atomic energy in non-power areas such as health, agriculture, food processing, water and industry.

India is alert to the dangers inherent in illicit trafficking of nuclear materials and other radioactive sources, particularly in the context of the international situation brought about by the 11 September events. The events have since underlined the necessity for the international community to pool its efforts to counter the menace of global terrorism. India appreciates the efforts made by the IAEA for the past several years, in cooperation with other States, aimed at preventing and combating illicit nuclear trafficking. In India we have an elaborate domestic system through adherence to the standards of physical protection recommended by the IAEA. We also have put in place a stringent system of expert controls to rule out illicit diversion of material equipment or technology in the nuclear field.

India considers the Regional Cooperative Agreement for Asia and the Pacific (RCA) an important mechanism for the growth and use of nuclear technologies for sustainable development in the region. Following the Agency's efforts aimed at transferring more and more management responsibilities and ownership to the member States, we have been continuously increasing our participation in the RCA Programmes. India has the requisite expertise in various RCA-related activities and well-developed infrastructure facilities, which have been made available as regional resource units. India has been regularly making its contribution to the Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF) in full and on time. This year also, we have pledged to contribute in full to the TCF.

The Agency, which has been fulfilling its mandate and has enlarged its core competence in the past 44 years, deserves our support, both technological and financial. New obligations of the Agency cannot be met without additional financial resources. Through a budgetary stratagem, this year we have managed to appear to be adhering to zero real growth, but in actual fact, there has been an increase in the outlay of the Agency. We have always urged that the IAEA, as a unique multidisciplinary science-and-technology organization in the United Nations system, must have the means to execute its activities. Under the one-house concept, rightly advocated by the Director General, it should be possible to judiciously use the scarce resources and implement activities that are mandatory and statutory and either sought by General Conference resolutions or requested by member States. While extra-budgetary support has its uses, it fundamentally promotes commerce and not the technological empowerment.

The IAEA was created with the primary objective of accelerating and enlarging the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world. This objective can be fulfilled only through advancement of technology. Accordingly, technology must become the central pillar on which the Agency's activities should rest. Safety and safeguards, while indeed important, can only be supporting activities.

Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan): At the outset, I would like to extend our warm felicitations to Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei on his reappointment as Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We also appreciate the excellent work that the Agency has been doing under his able leadership in the promotion of the peaceful application of nuclear energy.

Being a founding member of the IAEA, Pakistan is fully committed to the goals and objectives of the Agency. We acknowledge IAEA's important role in the process of economic development through the enhanced contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world.

The promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy is the *raison d'être* of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The world steadily needs more energy. Energy multiplies human labour, increasing productivity. The world population surpassed the 6 billion mark two years ago. Yet one third of that number, or 2 billion people, lack access to electricity. Development depends on energy, and the alternative to development is poverty and suffering.

The energy demand cannot be met by fossil fuel alone since that would impose an unacceptable burden on the environment. The massive development of hydropower is one option. The only other proven and sustainable option is the use of nuclear energy. We feel that opposition to nuclear power, despite its good safety record and environment-friendly character, is either based on misunderstandings or it is a deliberate pretext to deny this technology to developing countries.

Pakistan, in view of the limitations of its fossil fuel and hydropower resources, is keen to make increasing use of nuclear power to meet its future electricity requirements. Moreover, current power-generation requirements in my country are largely being met through the use of oil, resulting in huge oil import bills. In order to diversify the country's power generation system and reduce its dependence on energy imports, increasing utilization of nuclear power is a desirable option for Pakistan. In this context, we duly acknowledge the cooperation extended by the IAEA during the construction phase of our second nuclear plant at Chashma, which is under IAEA safeguards and which started its commercial operation in September last year. This power plant is a shining example of south-south cooperation and is making a significant contribution to our gross national product.

A high-profile safety culture is an indispensable component of any successful nuclear power programme. IAEA is playing an important role in safety-related issues. Pakistan itself attaches great importance and priority to the safe operation of its nuclear facilities. To ensure the requisite safety controls, our Government earlier this year set up the Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority, which has been given the responsibility of controlling, regulating and supervising all matters related to nuclear safety and radiation protection. Our commitment to a safety culture was also manifest in our prompt acceptance and ratification of the Convention on Nuclear Safety and in our steadfast commitment to compliance with the Convention by way of our active participation in the follow-up activities of the IAEA.

We appreciate the invaluable assistance provided by the IAEA in the field of nuclear safety through its advice, guidance, expert missions, lectures, workshops and short courses. For its part, Pakistan has been offering training to many IAEA nominees and, in collaboration with the IAEA, is ready to conduct long-duration courses in operational safety and safety analysis, with a university degree in nuclear safety. It is important that we strengthen and expand safety-related technical cooperation among all IAEA member countries. In this regard, we hope that the IAEA will play a more proactive role in convincing advanced countries to provide liberal transfers of safety-related technology and equipment to developing countries.

Pakistan has always emphasized the need and importance of IAEA safeguards. By enacting legislation last year on effective nuclear export controls, and by acceding to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, Pakistan has clearly demonstrated its resolve to carry out its obligations and responsibilities in this regard. Our track record in adhering to IAEA safeguards has been immaculate.

We are happy that the Agency's technical cooperation programme is gaining strength both in quality and in quantity. However, we feel that greater programme effectiveness could be ensured if adequate allocations were made to the Technical Cooperation Fund. Another source of concern is the non-payment or delayed payment of the contributions of Member States. As the Director General said himself in his statement, we must find better ways to ensure adequate and predictable funding. This is essential indeed, if the Agency is to have the necessary means to fulfil its mandate. In addition, maximum utilization of available resources within the regional areas and the universal involvement of developing countries in programme formulation are some of the other points requiring the Agency's attention.

While the Agency's positive role in promoting technical cooperation is acknowledged, it is important for the credibility of the IAEA to promote peaceful uses of the atom and to maintain the focus on its technical promotional character. We expect the Agency to follow a balanced and non-discriminatory approach

in providing access to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, particularly to developing States.

Mr. De Loecker (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — the associated countries of Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, and the European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area, Liechtenstein and Norway, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union has noted with great interest the report on the activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) presented to us by Director General ElBaradei, whose presence among us today we welcome. We would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm our full support for the important activities being conducted by the Agency in the areas of guaranteeing non-proliferation and of safety and the promotion of the safe use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes in the member States that have opted to use such technology.

The European Union is well aware of the difficult financial context within which the Agency is having to carry out its important tasks, and is concerned that a large number of the Agency's member States are still failing to pay their contributions to the regular budget. The Union unreservedly supports the important initiatives which have been launched in order to adapt to this difficult budgetary situation and to try to maximize the effectiveness of the Agency's activities. We believe that those initiatives are in the right direction and are bound to bear fruit as long as efforts continue.

On several occasions this year, the member States of the European Union have reaffirmed a number of fundamental management principles that they consider to be of particular importance. Those principles include strict limits on the number of projects on the basis of the less-but-better notion; a clear hierarchical organization of programmes and, as a corollary, greater flexibility in transferring resources between sectoral programmes as required; and focusing the Agency's efforts on those areas in which such activities are most likely to have a significant impact.

The European Union considers that all of the Agency's various tasks are important and useful. However, we believe that special attention should, of course, be paid to the safeguards programme. It is clear that the international community will not be able to reap the benefits of the peaceful uses of the atom unless there is an absolute assurance that nuclear activities and cooperation cannot be diverted from exclusively peaceful applications.

In that connection, the European Union notes with concern the growing imbalance between expenditures on the Agency's statutory activities with regard to non-proliferation safeguards and the resources which its member States are willing to allocate to it for that purpose as part of the regular budget. The Union would like to issue a firm reminder to member States that the responsibilities conferred upon the Agency by the Non-Proliferation Treaty in terms of verifying member States' compliance with their obligations necessitate essential activities to which the Agency is obliged to devote sufficient resources, in the interests of the international community as a whole.

The European Union has, of course, studied in great detail the Agency's report on its activities to ensure implementation of the safeguards agreements, and it welcomes its encouraging conclusions. It is also following with great interest the Agency's work on integrating safeguards. We trust that this will eventually lead to a reduction in inspection efforts in those States that have signed and satisfactorily implemented an additional protocol, and in respect of which the Agency has been able to conclude — or it has been established by other means — that all nuclear materials are subject to safeguards and continue to be used for peaceful nuclear activities.

The European Union welcomes the many important initiatives being taken by the Agency with regard to safety. We are pleased to note that those efforts are bearing fruit and that the Agency's investigations are continuing to indicate a general improvement in safety levels.

The European Union also welcomes the Agency's activities in assisting the development of the peaceful use of nuclear energy in its Member States. In that connection, we would reiterate our commitment to cooperating closely in that third pillar of the Agency's activities, inter alia through the Technical Cooperation

Programme, to which the Union makes a substantial contribution.

The European Union is satisfied with the Agency's continuing efforts to improve the effectiveness of the Technical Cooperation Programme in the interests of its recipients and of the donor countries. We particularly appreciate the Agency's policy of subjecting projects to a rigorous assessment and of selecting only those that meet a series of specific criteria. We note that this policy is already beginning to bear fruit, as shown by the reduction in the number of projects. The Union would like to encourage the Agency to persevere with this policy and to keep using all of the resources of modern management methods to continuously monitor the progress of projects in accordance with their objectives.

We look forward with great interest to the text of the draft resolution that is soon to be presented by Australia. We wish to affirm once again the European Union's firm intention to continue to cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency and to give it its full support. The European Union considers that the Agency plays an irreplaceable role in those areas for which it is responsible.

Mr. Motomura (Japan): On behalf of the Government of Japan, I offer my heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Grönberg of Finland for the excellent manner in which he conducted his presidency of the forty-fifth General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). I would also like to congratulate Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei on his reappointment as Director General of the IAEA and to extend to him my best wishes for the success of his second term. I also wish to thank him for his presentation of the IAEA report. Furthermore, I am pleased to extend a hearty welcome to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and to the Republic of Botswana, which have recently become members of the Agency.

The Government of Japan greatly appreciates the Agency's role in fostering and strengthening international cooperation on the peaceful use of nuclear energy, nuclear safety and nuclear non-proliferation. As the only country to have suffered a nuclear attack and as a country that has long been committed to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, Japan is determined to use its wealth of experience for the greater benefit of humankind. We attach the highest priority to safety and security in utilizing nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and we are striving to promote safety and to improve physical protection measures, both domestically and internationally.

Given the scarcity of its domestic energy resources, Japan has actively promoted the peaceful use of nuclear energy as a stable energy source in the course of its economic development. I am certain that the importance of this resource for Japan will increase in the years ahead.

There are two reasons why my Government has been promoting the enhanced utilization of nuclear energy. First, since Japan is heavily dependent on imported oil from abroad, nuclear energy contributes to a stable energy supply. Secondly, nuclear energy has enormous merit from the perspective of global environmental considerations. The Government of Japan will continue to make its use of plutonium transparent.

In the context of our bilateral cooperation, we are concerned at the situation of the people of the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan. In September 1999, the Government of Japan, together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), convened the Tokyo International Conference for assistance to the Semipalatinsk. As a follow-up to that Conference, and in close cooperation with the Government of Kazakhstan, my Government recently commenced a survey to assess the effects of radiation on the health of the people of that region.

Allow me briefly to highlight some of the aspects of the IAEA's activities which we deem to be particularly important.

In the light of the present international situation, enhancement of the nuclear non-proliferation regime is one of the most important items on the agenda of the international community. It is my conviction that strengthening the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) regime is the most realistic option. That is why the Government of Japan promptly concluded the additional protocol, which has the effect of strengthening safeguards for nuclear non-proliferation. We also proposed, during the General Conference of the IAEA last year, a plan of action to promote the conclusion of additional protocols by many States which have not yet done so.

Based on the plan of action and in cooperation with the IAEA, the Government of Japan organized in June the International Symposium for Further Reinforcement of IAEA Safeguards in the Asia-Pacific Region. The Symposium succeeded in deepening the understanding of participants on the issue of the universalization of the Additional Protocol. I hope that similar events will be organized by the Agency for other regions of the world.

I also call upon all States parties to the IAEA Safeguards Agreement to promptly conclude additional protocols through implementation of the plan of action. Towards that end, the Government of Japan remains willing to cooperate with the IAEA in terms of both human and financial resources.

As was stated in the Final Document of the NPT Review Conference last year, the early adoption of integrated safeguards will rationalize the burden of safeguards and should prove to be an important incentive for concluding the additional protocol. We urge the IAEA secretariat to accelerate its work on substantiating the concept of integrated safeguards.

Needless to say, it is essential to improve and create adequate security measures for nuclear materials and facilities. The Government of Japan remains strongly supportive of the activities and programmes of the IAEA, which, we believe, are conducive to preventing acts of terrorism.

From the perspective of maintaining peace and security in North-East Asia, the role of the IAEA in the grave context of suspected nuclear weapons development by North Korea is a pivotal one. In order that we may arrive at a realistic resolution of this matter, the Government of Japan will continue to actively support the efforts made by the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization to implement, smoothly and expeditiously, the Lightwater Reactor Project. I urge North Korea to improve its relations with the IAEA and to comply promptly and completely with its obligations under the safeguards agreement.

In closing, I would like to reiterate my Government's strong commitment to and support for the activities of the IAEA.

Mr. Tomka (Slovakia): First and foremost, I would like to thank Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei for his comprehensive introduction of the report on the activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Again, we find the report well balanced and highly informative.

My delegation fully supports and associates itself with the statement of the European Union delivered by the representative of Belgium. I would like, however, to briefly address some issues of particular interest to my delegation.

Slovakia continues to view the work of the Agency as truly indispensable for the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and for ensuring that its sources are not used for anything other than strictly peaceful purposes.

Looking back at last year's nuclear agenda, we would like to underline the importance of the sixth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its Final Document, which stressed the central position of the Agency in upholding the Treaty's non-proliferation regime through the operation of its safeguards system. In our view, it is the viability of the non-proliferation regime and the continued adherence of the States parties that, first and foremost, create the necessary conditions for the successful implementation of the strengthened review process of the Treaty.

We fully support the ongoing efforts of the Agency aimed at refining its safeguards system. The launching of the Model Additional Protocol to safeguards agreements represents a major tool in this respect. We encourage the swift conclusion of additional protocols by as many States as possible. Slovakia signed the Protocol in 1999, and preparations for its implementation are well under way.

Although we are pleased to note that the Agency has so far been able to verify the compliance of almost all States with their nuclear non-proliferation obligations, it is regrettable that in two cases it has not been in a position to fully perform its mandated duties.

We regret the continuing failure to bring the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty into force and the inability to resume negotiations on a ban on the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons. Both elements, if in place, would represent a large qualitative step towards strengthening the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. We appreciate the Agency's readiness to provide its expertise for negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

It is clear that measures to strengthen the safeguards system must be supported by the effective physical protection of nuclear material. Although illegal trafficking has so far involved only small quantities of nuclear material, combating it represents a growing challenge that calls for further decisive measures to be taken to prevent the recurrence of incidents. It is no wonder that at this session of the General Assembly we are paying more detailed attention to the chapters of the Agency's report covering that issue. The recent tragic events in our host country clearly suggest the scale of the consequences we might face in the future if the issue is not adequately addressed.

We recognize the activities of the Agency in this field, including the continued debate among experts on the need to revise the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials. The Agency's database on illicit trafficking incidents also represents a valuable instrument for understanding the scale of the issue and for the elaboration of effective remedial measures.

Slovakia is among the countries that operate peaceful nuclear facilities. Such facilities provide nearly 50 per cent of the electricity that we generate in a year. Their safe operation continues to be one our highest priorities. With this in mind, we have promoted and enjoyed fruitful cooperation with the Agency since joining it in the early 1990s. In the field of nuclear safety, I would like to mention the Agency's year 2000 review mission of units 1 and 2 of the Bohunice nuclear power plant in Slovakia, which concluded that a comprehensive safety upgrading programme had been developed and implemented.

At present, Slovakia is cooperating with the Agency on dozens of national, regional and interregional technical projects. One national project which merits particular attention is that on radiochemical facilities for producing medical radionuclides, which we are supporting by providing $1.45 million.

In addition to nuclear safety and technology, there are other important areas in which cooperation between Slovakia and the Agency takes place. The holding of international expert workshops has been particularly successful, and we are ready to continue to host them. With our broad expertise in peaceful uses of nuclear energy and nuclear-related applications, we are also prepared to host fellows and visiting scholars sponsored by the Agency.

Throughout the past year we also continued our cooperation in the field of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy with more than 20 States members of the Agency, as well as with a number of international organizations.

In conclusion, my delegation hopes that this year the General Assembly will be able to reintroduce, and possibly adopt by consensus, a substantial draft resolution on the report of the Agency. Without any doubt, that would be the best message we could deliver to Vienna, thereby demonstrating our unfailing support for the Agency. To this end, I pledge my delegation's full cooperation.

Mr. Requeijo Gual (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by thanking Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei for his introduction to the annual report on the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). I would also like to congratulate him on his well-deserved election to a second term as Director General of the IAEA and to convey to him Cuba's satisfaction with his excellent leadership of the Agency.

I also wish to welcome the Republic of Botswana and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, as new members of the IAEA this year.

The IAEA's efforts in the area of technical assistance and cooperation, safeguards and nuclear safety are valued by Cuba. Apart from certain questionable elements, these efforts result in a balance that is favourable to the tasks of the Organization. Technical development, promotion and cooperation activities represent the most valuable and commendable part of the IAEA's work. For this reason we believe that everyone is duty-bound to work so that cooperation is not only maintained but is also strengthened and diversified.

Nuclear energy offers a safe, technically rational and economically viable alternative to meet the pressing energy needs of most States. However, this has not prevented some developed countries from maintaining attitudes that are not in keeping with the principles and purposes of the IAEA, trying to cut back technical assistance programmes, reducing their contributions to the fund created for such purposes or placing selective conditions on their use.

Strengthening the IAEA technical cooperation programme should mean not only improving organizational systems and management methods; it should also ensure that the financial resources destined for that programme are made available on a reliable and increasing basis. In future the diversion of resources from the technical cooperation fund to the management of the programme should be prevented, and the programme management should be ensured in the regular budget.

Despite the significant results achieved, there are many challenges that the Agency faces. We feel that at this time there is an imbalance between the two main facets of the IAEA's work: cooperation and technical assistance have not benefited from the same vigour and integrity as have safeguard activities. The trend towards a decrease in real terms in financing for technical cooperation activities is not in accord with the growing needs of the developing countries. The increasingly globalized world in which we live will be less viable if there is no genuine resolve to contribute on the part of States possessing the greatest resources. Those are the countries that have the greatest responsibility to contribute to a genuine transfer of technology, accessible to all on an equal footing and without conditions.

The nuclear programme that has been carried out in Cuba since the 1980s was designed as part of the country's development and includes two basic components: applications of nuclear techniques, and nuclear energy. The plan to build the Juraguá nuclear electric power station was stopped recently because other options have emerged that are more economically viable in the country's current circumstances. Cuba meets more than 70 per cent of its electricity demands from nationally produced fuels.

Notwithstanding the decision concerning this specific project, Cuba recognizes the important role of nuclear technologies in sustainable development. Therefore, the country will continue to develop its nuclear programme, focusing now on the application of nuclear techniques to the various sectors of the socio-economic life of the country. We have achieved excellent results in the areas of human health, agriculture, industry and other applications. We are sending experts from a number of areas to other countries and offering our facilities for training foreign specialists, and some Cuban products have even been used for international cooperation projects in the use of nuclear energy.

In addressing the question of safeguards, the question of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) becomes an almost inevitable issue. Cuba's position on this Treaty is known. We take the view that its provisions are discriminatory and selective by their very nature, because they legitimize the possession of nuclear weapons by a select club of countries. The nuclear Powers that derive legitimacy from the Non-Proliferation Treaty are not even required to submit their nuclear facilities and arsenals to IAEA safeguards. These are the basic reasons why thus far Cuba has neither signed nor ratified that Treaty.

Although it is not a State party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and thus has no obligation whatsoever to negotiate safeguard agreements with the IAEA, Cuba currently has all its nuclear facilities subject to safeguard agreements with the Agency, and it fulfils them scrupulously. Moreover, October 1999 saw the signing of the additional protocol to the existing safeguard agreements between Cuba and the IAEA. Cuba thus became the first non-signatory of the Treaty to sign such a protocol.

As part of the rigid economic, financial and commercial blockade imposed on Cuba for more than 40 years, various actions have targeted our programme for the peaceful use of nuclear energy to prevent its advance. As is well known, in 1996 the United States Government adopted the infamous Helms-Burton Act, which, among other things, provides that the termination and the operation of any nuclear facility in Cuba, even when it is a facility for the peaceful use of nuclear energy, would be considered an act of aggression that would provoke an appropriate response from the United States.

Other pieces of American legislation currently in force spell out actions designed to boycott Cuba's nuclear programme in various ways. Cuba reiterates its strongest rejection of such discriminatory actions, which run counter to the statute of the IAEA. Despite those actions, our country will continue to develop its nuclear programme for peaceful purposes in a totally transparent manner and will continue to work tirelessly to promote nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Last year, following negotiations in Vienna and New York that lasted several months, the General Assembly adopted a basically procedural resolution on the IAEA's annual report. Although for many it was a frustrating exercise, in our view its main virtue was that a text was adopted without a vote, in contrast to what had been happening for several years. We hope that last year's experience spelled the end of the cycle of confrontation which should never have been initiated concerning this resolution. Given that it is dealing with an agency of the importance of the IAEA, the resolution should contain only consensus elements and should reflect those issues that have the necessary support from all delegations. This would make it possible for the General Assembly to send a clear signal of unity and support for the work done by the IAEA. Cuba reaffirms its full readiness to contribute to efforts made to achieve that objective.

Mr. Sevilla Somoza (Nicaragua), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Mr. Gatilov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, let me express our heartfelt condolences to the delegation and the people of the United States, the victims and the bereaved families of all those who died as a result of the unprecedented act of aggression perpetrated by the forces of international terrorism.

The large-scale terrorist attack perpetrated on 11 September 2001 demonstrated where the real challenge to security comes from, especially when coupled with terrorists' attempts to get their hands on weapons of mass destruction. It also demonstrated what civilized States should deploy their efforts against. We believe that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) should play its own important role in this area.

The Russian Federation would like to welcome the Director General of the IAEA, Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, to congratulate him on his re-election to his position and to thank him for submitting this regular Agency report for our consideration. In our opinion, the report provides us with an objective picture of the multifaceted activities of the Agency, covering such major areas as ensuring nuclear non-proliferation through its verification functions and assisting in the peaceful use of atomic energy for development purposes.

Russia adheres to a consistent policy with regard to securing strategic stability on the basis of preserving and strengthening the international legal framework in the area of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. By ratifying the key disarmament agreements — START II, along with the package of the New York arrangements on START and the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) — Russia has confirmed, not in word but in deed, its commitment to its obligations.

At this session of the General Assembly, Russia, together with the delegations of Belarus and China, has introduced a draft resolution on the preservation of and compliance with the ABM Treaty, which has been and remains the backbone of strategic stability system. By proposing this draft resolution in support of the ABM Treaty, we proceed from the need to further mobilize the efforts of the international community to prevent the existing system of treaties and agreements in the area of arms control and disarmament from being undermined.

Among the important elements of nuclear disarmament are the disposal of excess weapon materials and the reduction of the nuclear-weapon complex in Russia. Due to the successful implementation of the Russia/United States intergovernmental agreement of 18 February 1993 on the use of highly enriched uranium extracted from nuclear weapons, approximately 5,000 warheads have already been destroyed. We can also mention the progress made in the conversion of nuclear-weapon enterprises.

We believe that, apart from unilateral and bilateral steps in the area of nuclear disarmament, the time has come to start discussions on strategic issues within the framework of multilateral mechanisms, including among the five permanent members of the Security Council, who bear special responsibility for the fate of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the CTBT and other international agreements.

Certainly, one of the fundamental treaties in the nuclear sphere is the NPT, which has defined the international security system for over 30 years. Russia attaches great significance to the implementation of the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

As can be seen from the IAEA report, last year virtually all major programmes were implemented according to plan. We take special note of one important area of the Agency's activities, the

application of safeguards, which is interlinked with the enforcement of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The Russian Federation consistently acts in support of developing measures for the further strengthening of the IAEA safeguards system, including efforts to develop comprehensive safeguards. Russia is financing a national programme for the scientific and technological support of IAEA guarantees.

We should note the role that could be played by the IAEA in the possible international control of fissile materials released as a result of genuine nuclear disarmament. We believe that an example of this could be the Trilateral Initiative aimed at examining the various aspects of the placement by Russia and the United States of excess fissile materials originating in weapons under IAEA control.

We are convinced that helping in the development of nuclear energy has to remain a key priority area of the Agency's activities. An important event in this area was the beginning of the implementation of an international project on innovative nuclear reactors and nuclear fuel cycles. We see that this project is aimed at dealing with a specific task: developing coordinated criteria for selecting promising nuclear technologies of a new generation. Its implementation is one of the practical steps within the initiative put forward by President Vladimir Putin at the Millennium Summit last year, and this implementation will be conducive to the sustainable development of humankind, nuclear non-proliferation and the environmental stability of the planet.

On Russia's initiative, the forty-fifth session of the IAEA General Conference adopted a resolution encouraging all interested States to fully join the International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles and to make their own contributions to its implementation. We are grateful to the States that supported that resolution.

We see a positive trend in the change of attitude to nuclear energy that is taking place in the world. In May 2000, the Government of the Russian Federation approved a strategy for nuclear energy development in Russia for the first half of the twenty-first century. According to that strategy, nuclear energy development will exceed the development of other types of power generation by a factor of three. In July this year, Russia saw the adoption of a legislation package authorizing the import of radioactive nuclear fuel for technological storage and processing. We now have broad capabilities in terms of reprocessing spent fuel from nuclear power plants, especially as concerns power plants in the construction and operation of which we helped. New laws provide for the possibility of leasing fuel, which would guarantee the return of spent fuel to Russia. All of this will certainly be conducive to the promotion of international cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Russia supports the activities of the IAEA in improving the strategy of technical cooperation. The Russian Federation made its voluntary contribution, on time and in full, to the IAEA Technical Assistance and Cooperation Fund for the year 2000.

In conclusion, I would like to express our generally positive opinion the IAEA's work in the past year. I would like to suggest that there is a need to maintain the right proportion and balance among the major IAEA functional programmes.

We expect that this year the General Assembly will adopt a substantive draft resolution on the IAEA report. In our view, this would tangibly confirm the role that the Agency plays in fulfilling its important tasks relating to nuclear non-proliferation and assistance in the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Mr. Khairat (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I wish to extend my sincere congratulations to Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei on the renewal of his mandate as Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency. This demonstrates the confidence of all countries and their appreciation for his wise leadership in conducting the work of the Agency and in developing its activities to enhance the peaceful application of nuclear energy in the service of humankind and prosperity, and in strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime. I also wish to thank him for his excellent presentation of the Agency's annual report.

We have read the annual report of the Agency and have learned of its clear achievements over the past year. Due to lack of time, it would be difficult for us to address the various aspects of the Agency's work as set out in the report, aspects such as nuclear safety, radiation safety, security of material, and so on. However, we wish to reaffirm the great importance we attach to the Agency's comprehensive safeguards system as a means of observing and verifying the

peaceful use of nuclear energy and for preventing the diversion of such energy towards military applications.

As has been its firm position at the regional and international levels over the years, Egypt believes that the Agency's comprehensive safeguards system is the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. We believe that universal accession is of utmost priority. This was called for by the sixth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and that appeal was renewed unanimously as one of the main objectives in the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime. From this perspective and in the light of the international momentum towards achieving universal accession to the Agency's safeguards regime, we are amazed at the position of certain countries that are active and influential in the field of non-proliferation, which occasionally adopt a negative attitude towards the need to attain universal accession to the safeguards system. This clear contradiction demonstrates the lack of credibility of certain influential countries in dealing seriously with the countries that fail to comply with the principles now enshrined at the international level. They continue to demand that additional measures be implemented by countries already committed to those principles. This contradiction is completely incomprehensible and does not reflect a serious international approach to non-proliferation. In this context, we believe that the resolution of the Agency's General Conference on the strengthening of the safeguards system is a good step forward. It evinces a certain objectivity regarding the importance of achieving the safeguards regime, and we look forward to more international action in this regard.

Egypt attaches great importance to the aims and principles of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and nuclear disarmament in the world. Achieving progress in this field, especially in the Middle East, is of critical importance in the light of Israel's intransigence and its threatening use of obsolete strategies of deterrence. All the countries of the region have acceded to the NPT and have placed their nuclear activities under comprehensive Agency safeguards. That is a bid to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. However, Israel continues to stand apart from the efforts in the region in this regard.

Since 1974, Egypt has taken the initiative to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. This is an appeal that the General Assembly has repeatedly renewed by consensus since 1980, culminating in President Mubarak's initiative of 18 April 1990 calling for the creation of a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, as a natural continuation of Egypt's ongoing bid to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Towards the implementation of this initiative, the Agency's General Conference unanimously issues annually a resolution on applying Agency safeguards in the Middle East. Despite all of that, Israel still refuses to comply with international will and refuses to subject its nuclear facilities to the safeguards regime. Those efforts and appeals are not merely Egyptian or Arab demands, but an international demand involving many other countries. That international will was reflected in the Final Document of the sixth NPT Review Conference, held in 2000. The Final Document welcomed the accession of all the countries of the Middle East, except Israel, to the NPT. It also reaffirmed the importance of Israel's accession to the Treaty and its placing all its nuclear installations under the full scope of Agency safeguards.

We appreciate the Agency's efforts to develop and improve the aims and effectiveness of the Agency's technical cooperation programme with Member States, especially with developing countries, and particularly in Africa. We also support the Agency's practical steps towards improving the technical cooperation programme through early consultations with Member States concerning the details of the various programmes, as well as through improving coordination between the secretariat and the managers of proposed projects. However, we wish to highlight the importance of adequately funding these activities because they are a basic component of the Agency's work.

In conclusion, I wish to reaffirm Egypt's attention to the need for the General Assembly to adopt a substantive resolution every year concerning this agenda item, in the light of the importance we attach to the Agency's work and to the peaceful applications of nuclear energy. We believe that the procedural resolution of the General Assembly's fifty-fifth session does not rise to the level of the Agency's work.

Mr. Balarezo (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to convey our thanks to Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei for his presentation of the exhaustive report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and to congratulate him on his re-election to a second term as

Director General of the IAEA. This re-election reaffirms the confidence of the international community in the important work that he has been doing and the need for it to continue in order to consolidate the achievements in the three pillars of the Agency's task: the safeguards system, encouraging the safety of nuclear facilities and promoting the transfer of technology and technical cooperation for peaceful purposes.

The terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C., almost two months ago highlight the urgent need for an effective system of protection for fissile material and nuclear facilities, to combat illicit trafficking in such material and to strengthen the non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament regime through the immediate implementation of the 13 points agreed by consensus at the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The International Atomic Energy Agency has played a key role in these areas by strengthening the only option that absolutely guarantees the non-use of nuclear weapons by state and non-state actors. That option requires the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Peru is convinced of the need for an effective and genuine international verification system for fissile materials and nuclear facilities and for ensuring exclusively peaceful use.

On the basis of the experience of recent years and of the recognition of the need to expand the IAEA's assessment and information capacities accurately to determine if a diversion of fissile material for military purposes has occurred, my country signed the additional safeguards Protocol. When this Protocol came into force on 23 July, Peru became the first Latin American State fully to commit itself to the objectives of the Agency, aimed at making the safeguards system more effective and efficient and thus at enhancing the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Moreover, in December this year, Peru will host a regional IAEA seminar to promote the signing of safeguards agreements and additional protocols among the States parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Peru thereby seeks to contribute to the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime in Latin America and the Caribbean. The seminar will also enjoy the cooperation of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean and of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America.

My country wishes to highlight here the debate that was held at the recent forty-fifth regular session of the General Conference on radiological protection and the safe management of radioactive waste, including safe transport of such materials, which led to the consensus adoption of an unprecedented resolution on that important topic. That resolution, co-sponsored by Peru, is designed to foster constructive dialogue between transporting States and those potentially affected by such activity through early notification of such shipment. It also recognizes such important concepts as the protection of island and coastal States from actual economic losses that could be caused by an accident involving radioactive material and the objective liability in such cases.

These elements, among others, will by a key contribution towards building an adequate and comprehensive international regime on the transport of radioactive material. This is a matter of profound international concern, as confirmed by the convening by the IAEA Board of Governors of a conference on this issue, to be held in 2003. Moreover, Peru would stress the significant support it has received from the IAEA in the area of technical cooperation for peaceful purposes, in particular in the context of the development plan for the Peru-Ecuador border region.

As in the past, Peru will continue to work for the priority objectives of the International Atomic Energy Agency and will support its efforts to fulfil its responsibility in promoting the safe and peaceful uses of nuclear energy and in averting their destructive use. In this regard, we appeal to the international community to provide the IAEA with the requisite financial resources so that it may continue to carry out its valuable objectives of strengthening development and international peace and security.

Mr. Dauth (Australia): I want to begin by thanking Director General ElBaradei for his comprehensive statement on the achievements of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the challenges it will face over the coming year. In carrying out the Agency's mandate, member States have been very well served by Mr. ElBaradei's leadership. Australia was therefore very pleased to join with others in approving his reappointment as Director General until 2005. We look forward to continuing our

close cooperation with him and the members of the Secretariat.

Australia looks forward to an even closer working relationship with the Agency in 2001-2002, when an Australian will chair the Board of Governors. As part of those responsibilities, it falls to my delegation to submit a draft resolution on the report of the IAEA to this Assembly. We hope to do so in the next few days, once the very intensive process of informal consultations currently being undertaken in Vienna has concluded.

Article 1 of the United Nations Charter lays down a lofty goal, that is, to

> "maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace".

Preventing threats to the peace requires the building of confidence between nations and the development of an effective international security system. The IAEA's system of nuclear safeguards and other verification measures make a vital contribution to pursuing this goal.

The events of 11 September have vividly demonstrated to us all the imperative of redoubling the international community's efforts to respond to global security threats, such as terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The Agency's efforts to ensure that nuclear and other radioactive material is not misappropriated are vitally important, as is the observance by all States of the various guides and other documents on physical protection developed by the Agency over the years. Australia attaches particular importance to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, calls upon all States to adhere to it and looks forward to the extension of its scope to cover material in domestic use, storage and transport. In this regard, Australia welcomes the Director General's decision to convene a group of experts to draft a well-defined amendment aimed at strengthening the Convention and at encouraging States to become parties to it.

Australia considers the International Atomic Energy Agency to be a central pillar of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, of which the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone. NPT safeguards applied by the Agency remain essential to advancing trade and cooperation in support of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. As a major uranium supplier, Australia places its uranium exports under Agency safeguards to ensure that Australian-obligated nuclear material is used only for peaceful purposes. We very much value the contribution that the Agency's safeguards make to establishing the climate of assurance under which international nuclear cooperation is possible.

More than a year has passed since the landmark outcome of the 2000 NPT Review Conference set an ambitious agenda for the international community for promoting nuclear non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference recognized that the Agency's safeguards are an indispensable component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, and endorsed strengthening the safeguards system through adoption of additional protocols. Regrettably, the 2000 Review Conference's recognition of the importance of additional protocols has not been reflected in the rate of signature and ratification of additional protocols by States. We take this opportunity to urge States that have yet to sign or ratify an additional protocol to do so as quickly as possible. We also urge those States that have yet to conclude their NPT safeguards agreements to do so without further delay.

Australia is pleased to be the first State in which integrated safeguards are being applied. The Agency is gaining practical experience in Australia in implementing new measures such as unannounced inspections, complementary access and managed access, which will prove invaluable as integrated safeguards are extended to other countries. We hope that, as an important matter, Australia's experience will also demonstrate that integrated safeguards are not burdensome, but that they rather deliver benefits in terms of increased efficiency and effectiveness.

The ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament will not be achieved without effective measures that ensure nuclear non-proliferation. The 2000 Review Conference identified the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty as one of the most urgent disarmament and non-proliferation steps the international community should take. We commend the Agency for its ongoing contribution to the dialogue on possible verification requirements for such a treaty.

There is a continuing need to remain vigilant in looking for clandestine nuclear weapons programmes and in maintaining pressure on non-compliant States. Two States continue to test the non-proliferation regime: the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iraq. It is of concern that the Agency is still unable to verify the correctness and completeness of the inventory declaration of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea given that that country has an international legal obligation to comply with its safeguards agreement. It is essential for successful completion of the light water reactor project that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea cooperate fully with the IAEA and come into full compliance with its IAEA safeguards agreement as soon as possible.

The concern with Iraq is that, since December 1998, the IAEA has been unable to conduct its verification and monitoring activities under relevant Security Council resolutions. We welcome the Agency's preparedness to resume such verification in Iraq as soon as circumstances allow. For its part, Iraq must now cooperate fully with the Agency and with the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission to enable the Agency to fulfil the mandate entrusted to it by the Security Council.

Maintaining peace and security also has socio-economic dimensions. In that regard, Australia places great importance on the unique role played by the Agency in ensuring the safe utilization of nuclear energy and in the application of nuclear technologies in developing countries.

The 2000 NPT Review Conference, reinforced by successive General Conferences of the IAEA, has underlined the central importance of maintaining nuclear safety at optimal levels. Australia emphasizes the importance of the Agency's work in developing safety standards governing the nuclear industry and in developing legal regimes and assistance programmes to strengthen nuclear safety in member States. A particular focus for Australia is promoting improvements in the international safety regime for research reactors. Australia also continues to promote constructive dialogue between shipping and coastal States on the safe transport of radioactive material.

In line with article IV of the NPT, the Agency has been recognized by successive NPT Review Conferences as the principal agent for technology transfers for peaceful nuclear purposes. We welcome the Agency's efforts to strengthen the delivery of technical cooperation, including through the use of strategic planning tools such as thematic planning, country programme frameworks and the model project approach.

Australia has been pleased to contribute to the Agency's technical cooperation activities over the past year, both by contributing to the Agency's Technical Cooperation Fund and through direct involvement in activities which foster cooperation in the transfer of knowledge and technology for peaceful nuclear applications. Australian specialists have undertaken many expert missions and lecturing assignments as part of the activities of the technical cooperation programme, and Australia has hosted a number of IAEA meetings and training events. We also contribute significantly to technical cooperation activities through our extra-budgetary contributions to specific Agency projects. Australia has also provided strong support to the management, structure and programme of the Agency's Regional Cooperative Agreement for Asia and the Pacific.

The external environment in which the Agency operates is highly fluid, and the Agency must maintain the capacity to respond quickly and effectively to external developments, be they related to physical protection, nuclear proliferation, nuclear safety or sustainable development.

Mr. ElBaradei's comments reflect the highlights of another full year of activity by the Agency in pushing forward with its mandate to harness the atom for the benefit of humanity. Australia will continue to provide technical, financial and political support for that effort.

Mr. Sun Joun-yung (Republic of Korea): First of all, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to Mr. ElBaradei on his re-election as Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). My delegation would like to thank him and his staff for their dedication and for their untiring efforts to accomplish the Agency's mandates.

Throughout its 45-year history, the IAEA has fulfilled many important roles. It has been a steadfast advocate for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), a mediator in favour of the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and a leader in forging international cooperation on nuclear issues. In this new century, it is imperative that the international

community continue to recognize and assert the importance of the Agency in those and other areas in order to ensure the more positive and productive uses of nuclear energy.

As a stable and economical energy source, nuclear power continues to make significant contributions to economic development, environmental conservation and the improvement of living standards around the globe. I believe that in the future the role of nuclear energy in assisting sustainable development worldwide will further increase. One upcoming project that points the way towards the broader use of nuclear power is the IAEA's International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles. My Government welcomes that project and plans to contribute to its successful development.

The Republic of Korea remains at the forefront in developing advanced nuclear power technology. In particular, Korea is developing a next-generation 1,400-megawatt reactor and a system-integrated modular small reactor used for both desalination and power generation. We are proud to be among the Member States working hard to develop innovative nuclear systems to meet a wide range of global needs.

The future of nuclear energy is inextricably linked with the issue of nuclear safety. For this reason, we must make continuous efforts to promote worldwide nuclear safety. We welcome the entry into force last June of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, as an important framework for securing global nuclear safety. My Government is currently in the process of ratifying this Convention.

Regarding the safety and security of radioactive materials, my country has implemented the radiation safety information system (RASIS), which can track and monitor radioisotopes from production to disposal via the Internet. We believe that further discussions are needed at the international level to continuously improve the safety and security of radioactive materials. In this context, I would like to draw attention to my country's recent proposal to establish a worldwide information network monitoring the sale and management of radioactive materials, a proposal made during the IAEA's General Conference last month.

Furthermore, in light of the terrorist attacks of 11 September in the United States, the importance of the physical protection of nuclear material and the need to combat illicit trafficking cannot be overemphasized. In this regard, we welcome the Director General's decision to convene an open-ended group meeting of legal and technical experts next December to draft a well-defined amendment strengthening the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. My Government is looking forward to participating in this meeting.

The Korean Government considers non-proliferation to be the foremost prerequisite for the use and development of nuclear energy. For this reason, we have made an active contribution to all aspects of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. One of the most essential elements of this regime is the safeguards system of the IAEA.

In this context, we are pleased to note that the Agency has concluded in its Safeguards Implementation Report (SIR) for 2000 that among the 140 States that have implemented their safeguards agreements there have been no indications of either a diversion of nuclear material or the misuse of facilities or equipment placed under the safeguard of the Agency.

In addition, the report provides even broader assurances for the seven member States with additional protocols that are in force or are being provisionally applied. The Agency was able to affirm not only that there had been no diversion of declared nuclear material, but also that there has been no indication of undeclared activities or nuclear material. My delegation commends the Agency for its endeavours to bring about these positive results.

The delegation of the Republic of Korea would also like to commend the recent efforts by the IAEA to strengthen the effectiveness of the safeguards system and improve its efficiency. We look forward to the timely completion of a conceptual framework for the integrated safeguards system. We also urge the IAEA to remain vigilant in securing cost neutrality in this project.

To enhance nuclear transparency, the Republic of Korea has for the past four years had in effect its own State system of accounting and control, in addition to the inspections conducted by the IAEA. These efforts have enabled my country to attain more than 95 per

cent of the inspection goals. Under this programme, Korea is helping the IAEA foster the experimental new partnership approach, which we hope will be developed into a new model for IAEA inspections in the future.

Since 1993 the General Conference of the IAEA has adopted resolutions urging the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to fully comply with its safeguards agreement with the IAEA. Last November the Agency conveyed to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea a detailed programme of the entire verification process. In May 2001 the Agency presented two concrete steps that could be taken with respect to the isotope production laboratory and the verification of plutonium in spent fuel rods stored in canisters at the 5 megawatt reactor facility. The General Conference of the IAEA, in its resolution GC(45)/RES/16 of 21 September 2001, inter alia, welcomes such efforts by the Agency and strongly encourages the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to respond positively and at an early date to the Agency's first concrete steps.

Thanks to the efforts of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) secretariat and its partners, the construction work for the light-water reactor project is moving forward. Last September KEDO began the excavation of the power block, with the permission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. With the completion of the site arrangement and building infrastructure, KEDO is poised to proceed with this important milestone in the construction of the reactors.

Under the Agreed Framework, before the reactor's key nuclear components can be delivered, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea must come into full compliance with its safeguards agreement with the IAEA. Given the Agency's assessment that it would take three to four years to verify the correctness and completeness of the initial report of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, we call upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to provide the IAEA with full cooperation in a prompt manner. Against such a backdrop, we sincerely hope that recent positive developments on the Korean Peninsula and in North-East Asia will promote full implementation of the relevant agreements.

Before closing, I would like to draw attention to the resolution adopted at the forty-third General Conference of the IAEA to amend article VI of the Agency's Statute, regarding the enlargement of the IAEA's Board of Governors. We ask all member States that have not ratified the amendment to do so promptly, so that the amendment can enter into force as soon as possible.

I conclude by affirming my delegation's unwavering commitment to the objectives of the IAEA and its strong support for the Agency's work.

Mr. Fonseca (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am honoured to take the floor on behalf of the delegations of Argentina and Brazil to express our appreciation for the report introduced by the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei.

Everyone is familiar with Brazil and Argentina's active and permanent commitment to the international community's objectives of non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and the promotion of the peaceful uses of atomic energy. Those objectives guarantee the rights of all States to carry out research on nuclear energy and to produce and utilize it for peaceful purposes. It is for this reason that Brazil and Argentina are making this joint statement today in commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC), and in order to announce the establishment of the Argentine-Brazilian Agency for the Application of Nuclear Energy (ABAEN).

Both of those events illustrate Brazil and Argentina's continued and permanent resolve to maintain and strengthen the bonds of friendship developed in the 1980s, when the political will first emerged in our countries to bring our societies closer together and to integrate them. Our societies' political will to enhance trust in the peaceful purposes of our respective nuclear programmes is a fundamental component of a broader commitment to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. That political will coalesced in 1991 with the creation of the ABACC, a bilateral agency aimed at applying bilateral safeguards on nuclear materials in both countries through the common accounting and control system.

That action went hand in hand with the application of the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) safeguards at every facility in Argentina and Brazil. Those safeguards take into account the bilateral control system and the entry into force in both countries of the Treaty for the Prohibition

of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean.

This year we are celebrating the tenth anniversary of ABACC. Since its establishment, the Agency has been accumulating considerable experience in the fulfilment of the tasks entrusted to it. We would like to underscore the competence and professionalism of its staff and inspectors, who meet, and indeed exceed, the highest international standards, and who demonstrate the high level of technical and functional training provided by the Agency. The mandate this bilateral agency received from our countries is concrete and permanent. ABACC has been, is and will continue to be a key instrument for transparency and bilateral rapprochement. We believe that ABACC's permanent mission will continue to promote greater ties of friendship between our two countries.

In that context, it is only natural that the next steps in bilateral cooperation between Argentina and Brazil in this sphere should be in the heretofore unexplored dimension of joint endeavours in the field of the peaceful use of nuclear technology. In Buenos Aires on 14 August 2001, Argentina and Brazil signed a joint declaration establishing the Argentine-Brazilian Agency for Applications of Nuclear Energy (ABAEN).

ABAEN opens a new chapter in relations between Argentina and Brazil in the nuclear sphere by increasing cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear science and technology. We trust that the closest possible cooperation in such areas as the nuclear fuel cycle, the production of radioisotopes, the management of radioactive waste and developing innovative technologies for power-generating reactors, among others, will yield concrete results to the benefit of both our countries. ABAEN will provide the proper conditions and synergies in this and other fields appropriate for the development and implementation of joint projects.

Furthermore, ABAEN will strengthen and complement the activities of the Brazil-Argentina Standing Committee on Nuclear Policy which, in addition to being the context in which the Agency was conceived, is also a vehicle for dialogue conducive to undertaking and coordinating political, technical and business initiatives in the nuclear sector. ABAEN will have a virtual organizational structure with representation from governmental entities and the main corporations of each country's nuclear sector. As its first task, ABAEN will, in the next 180 days, develop medium-term scenarios for Government planning in the nuclear sector, as well as a programme of action for the first year.

Apart from being a remarkable result of the process of confidence-building and transparency, the establishment of ABAEN also strengthens our relations in the nuclear area — which every day include more new projects and common objectives.

Finally, we wish to underscore the role of the IAEA as the promoter of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and as an essential actor in the international regime for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Kmoníček (Czech Republic): Since the Czech Republic has joined the position presented by Belgium on behalf of the European Union and the associated countries, I would like to touch upon only some topics that are of particular importance to my Government.

At the outset, I would like to thank Director General ElBaradei for his comprehensive statement highlighting the progress of the Agency's activities during the past year.

First, let me share some thoughts on the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) at the threshold of the new millennium. The Czech Republic supports the ongoing joint efforts of the secretariat and the member States to strengthen the Agency, to increase its necessary effectiveness and efficiency and to address its budgetary constraints. Given the challenges of the twenty-first century, it is imperative to make better use of the Agency's capacities, as it is the only global platform for cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy and ionizing radiation. At the same time, it is equally important to maintain and strengthen the objective character of its work, which ensures its competence and universally recognized reputation.

We cannot overstate the importance of the IAEA's responsibilities in relation to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which require continuous support by all members in terms of policies, know-how, financing and implementation of the related legal instruments. My country is about to complete the necessary domestic legislative and systemic framework for the implementation of the additional protocol, signed with the IAEA during the forty-third General

Conference. A comprehensive amendment of the Czech Atomic Act, on which the Parliament will deliberate by the end of this year, is the last prerequisite for launching a speedy ratification of the additional protocol. We are well on the way to applying the strengthened IAEA safeguards to the fullest and we reiterate our call on Member States that have not already done so to proceed likewise.

We commend the support the Agency has rendered to member States in recent years in working out and implementing important legal instruments. In this regard, let me recall the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management.

I am pleased to report that my country was among the 26 States that adhered to the Joint Convention by depositing its instrument of ratification by 20 March 2001, thereby enabling the Convention's entry into force 90 days later. I would like to take this opportunity to appeal to all Member States that have not yet done so to take the necessary steps to become a party to the Joint Convention in time to be able to attend the first review meeting of contracting parties.

The second round of reporting procedures for the Convention on Nuclear Safety is just about to start. The Government of the Czech Republic has already approved the amended text of the national report, which provides an update on the existing regulatory and legal framework as well as a case study of the Dukovany and Temelín nuclear power plants. We look forward to the second Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties, scheduled for April 2002, to demonstrate our full compliance with the requirements of the Convention.

We also welcome the Agency's role in the process of amending and reinforcing the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. Like the European Union, the Czech Republic is in favour of considering the need for a review conference after a well-defined draft amendment has been prepared.

At the very end of last year, the Czech Government approved an updated national energy policy. The nuclear option is maintained, and improved efforts will be made with respect to the efficient use of energy and the use of renewable energy sources. This was done in line with the new legal framework implemented in the Czech Republic for the utilization of nuclear energy and ionizing radiation. That framework is based on the following priorities: the degree of control and transparency in the nuclear industry, and the independence and diversity of expertise on safety and radiological protection.

In the context of these steps, the commissioning of the Temelín nuclear power plant is nearing its final stage. The power plant underwent a thorough licensing procedure, and, taking into account the complexity of the technology, nothing irregular has happened so far during the commissioning tests. Recognizing the international dimension of nuclear safety and of radiation protection issues, the Czech authorities and the licence-holder submitted the siting, design improvement, construction and commissioning of the power plant to the scrutiny of a number of independent peer reviews with international participation.

At this stage, let me reiterate what I said at the beginning of my statement when I underlined the role of the Agency as an information-exchange platform and an action centre for the peaceful use of nuclear energy and radiation.

Since we have learned several lessons in the course of the Temelín nuclear power plant debate, I would like to share some of them with the Assembly.

The valuable results of the peer reviews provided by the IAEA should be better advertised and explained to the public in member States. The same applies, more generally, to the philosophy of IAEA safety standards as well to the measures taken to increase the safety level of nuclear installations.

We note that member States have failed to take due account of, and even deliberately ignored, the findings made by the IAEA, especially on the safety of nuclear installations, which undermines the Agency's competence and authority. The increase in safety reviews of nuclear installations by various organizations and forums may cast doubt on the central role of the IAEA in this field. We must not allow this role to be eroded.

Let me now touch upon the issue of IAEA technical assistance and cooperation. In 2001 the Czech Republic took another step towards balancing the amount of technical support received and the assistance provided to other member States. We are gradually increasing our involvement in technical cooperation programmes for third countries, so that we

can share with them our knowledge and expertise. Earlier this year we pledged voluntary financial contributions to national technical cooperation projects in Armenia, Bulgaria and Georgia. We are continuing, as a long-term initiative, to accept fellowships and scientific visits related to upgrading national radiation protection networks in various regions of the world.

Let me also express our gratitude to the secretariat, namely to the European section of the Department of Technical Cooperation, for the excellent coordination work done in the projects in which my country takes part. I would like specifically to mention the regional initiative of countries operating nuclear power plants with VVER 1000-type reactors to review the design basis of those reactors — an initiative that is being carried out under the European regional programme.

In conclusion, let me reassure the Assembly of my Government's continued commitment to supporting and expanding the Agency's role in international cooperation in the peaceful and safe use of nuclear energy and ionizing radiation for the benefit of all member States. I would like also to express the Czech Republic's appreciation for the personal involvement of the Director General, Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, in the promotion of the Agency's activities. We look forward to further fruitful cooperation with him in the course of his second term in office.

Ms. Lajous (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to convey the Mexican delegation's appreciation to the Director General, Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, for his introduction of the report of the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the year 2000. Our warmest recognition goes to him for the leadership that he has shown at the helm of the Agency and for the way in which he has fulfilled the mandate entrusted to him by member States. We wish him every success in his second term in office in the leadership of the IAEA.

The appalling terrorist acts that took place on 11 September in this country have provoked worldwide condemnation. Mexico has stated its political resolve to act in concert with the international community to combat the threat to international peace and security represented by acts of terrorism. Security Council resolutions 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001) have established a frame of reference for coordinated action. In this regard, Mexico believes that the IAEA has a role to play in combating the threat posed by the possession by terrorist groups of weapons of mass destruction. It is clear that all nuclear facilities must to be subject to the safeguards of the IAEA. We appeal to all of those States that have not yet done to so to finalize the appropriate agreements with the Agency.

Mexico will continue to urge that the application of verification measures to nuclear materials and equipment should be a priority activity for the Agency. Activities in this field have been particularly important in the light of the unequivocal commitment of the nuclear-weapon States to the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, with a view to bringing about nuclear disarmament.

Another issue of particular importance to Mexico relates to the Agency's technical cooperation activities. We support the efforts of the Director General to promote projects in this area. We commend him for the application of concepts such as the central criterion, the sustainability of projects and the methodology of the logical framework, which will have an impact on the design and the quality of projects in this field. Mexico is promoting technical cooperation among developing countries, as evidenced by the two technical cooperation projects we are engaged in with Guatemala.

At the regional level, Mexico is honoured to hold the chairmanship of the Technical Coordination Board of the Regional Cooperation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean. In this context, we will strive to enhance the Agreement's impact on the region, to streamline administrative procedures and to mobilize resources to support technical activities.

We would like to express our satisfaction at the adoption, at the recent General Conference of the Agency, of resolutions relating to measures to step up international cooperation in the area of nuclear, radiological, transport and radioactive-waste safety. We welcome the fact that States continue to request the assistance of the Agency in carrying out nuclear safety assessments and identifying needs and priorities in this area.

We welcome the fact that, during the most recent General Conference, progress was also made on the question of the transport of radioactive materials. The acceptance of nuclear energy as an option for the support of sustainable development is linked to issues

of safety, in particular the handling of radioactive waste and the transport of such waste.

Mexico would like to express its concern about the risks involved in the maritime transport of radioactive material and hazardous waste. At the national level, we have begun a process of reviewing and updating Mexican legislation in this field. We are in the process of drafting a regulation on the transport of radioactive material, which will incorporate the most recent recommendations of the Agency and other international agencies.

We encourage States to take into account the practices of certain dispatching and operating States in the area of radioactive materials and spent fuel and to hold timely consultations with the coastal States involved prior to the dispatch of such materials. Dialogue between the parties directly affected may be effective in terms of reducing the risks involved in the transport of radioactive materials, in full conformity with the Agency's transport regulations.

My delegation would like to place on record its gratitude to the Director General and to the secretariat of the International Atomic Energy Agency for their efforts in fully implementing the mandates entrusted to them by Member States. We are convinced that, in addition to political support, the International Atomic Energy Agency needs a solid financial foundation. We hope that States will be punctual in paying their contributions and increase the level of extrabudgetary resources to enable the Agency to carry out its programme of activities, particularly those in the area of technical cooperation.

Mr. Rosenthal (United States of America): We are meeting today just blocks from the ashes of the World Trade Center towers. The appalling acts of terrorism on 11 September underscore the fact that terrorists will use any lethal means accessible to kill innocent civilians. The countrymen of many of the States represented here were murdered on that sunny fall day. Had nuclear weapons been available to the terrorists, the carnage would have been incalculable. We deeply appreciate the condolences for the victims of the 11 September terrorist attacks that we received from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its member States, and we offer our condolences to all of the victims of the 11 September attacks. We are also grateful for the unequivocal condemnation of those attacks by the United Nations, as expressed in Security Council resolution 1368 (2001). Although they were intended to make us cower and to intimidate us, those acts of terror have only strengthened our resolve to counter the evil of terrorism wherever it appears.

As we reflect on those acts of terror, we have become increasingly mindful that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the IAEA have been, and will remain, critical to our collective efforts to counter any form of nuclear terrorism. The NPT establishes an essential framework for global and regional stability- by inhibiting the spread of nuclear weapons. The Treaty also facilitates and regulates cooperation among States in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and serves as an essential foundation for progress in nuclear disarmament. Moreover, the efforts of the Agency to deter and detect the diversion of nuclear material from peaceful to non-peaceful uses have become increasingly important over the past decade, as more States have joined the NPT and as additional nuclear material and facilities have come under the Agency's safeguards system. As such, the NPT and Agency safeguards are instruments to be used so as to prevent nuclear material from being diverted to terrorists or to States that might support them. The success of the NPT regime in general, and of nuclear safeguards in particular, has limited terrorists' targets of opportunity.

The NPT has become almost universal, and it would not be as strong today were it not for political decisions by almost all States over the past 30 years to join the Treaty. Joining includes an undertaking by all non-nuclear-weapon States to conclude comprehensive IAEA safeguards agreements. Today, however, the Agency has new tools and new authorities that are contained in the Model Protocol. Acceptance of additional protocols will further strengthen the Treaty and promote the obtaining of our shared nuclear non-proliferation objectives. The Protocol's value to non-proliferation will grow as more countries accept it and as momentum builds toward universal acceptance. We welcome the important role the Agency has played in promoting universal acceptance of additional protocols. Action on the Protocol represents an important opportunity for each State to contribute further to strengthening the barriers to the spread of nuclear weapons. The United States calls upon all States to bring into force additional protocols, as well as required safeguards agreements.

Over the past 15 years, its member States have steadily expanded the scope of the Agency's work in safeguards and physical protection, nuclear safety and technical cooperation. The resources to do this work, however, are increasingly strained due to serious constraints on the Agency's regular budget. The IAEA Director General has recently warned that, without relief soon, the Agency may fail in its critical function of verifying the location and use of nuclear material and supporting nuclear safety worldwide. These warnings were issued before the events of 11 September, which have further reinforced the importance of strengthening safeguards and the protection of nuclear material and facilities.

The possible theft of nuclear material and sabotage of nuclear facilities have long been matters of great concern. If the Agency were unable effectively to track the location and use of nuclear material worldwide, or to give adequate support to national nuclear safety measures, the consequences to the global community could be grave. We must not let this happen. Now more than ever, we need the IAEA's skills and expertise to guard against this.

The physical protection of nuclear material and facilities is essential to preventing sabotage and provides a first line of defence by ensuring that nuclear material is not diverted to unauthorized uses, including during transport. Agency guidelines and advisory services for physical protection help States to implement measures to protect their nuclear material against theft and their nuclear facilities against sabotage, thereby reducing the risk that a terrorist could steal nuclear material or seize a nuclear facility. We welcome the Director General's decision to convene an open-ended meeting of legal and technical experts to draft a well-defined amendment to strengthen the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. The time is right to strengthen the Convention, and we look forward to an early decision to do so.

The Agency's safeguards system provides assurance to all States that nuclear activities under safeguards are devoted solely to peaceful purposes. Safeguards dissuade potential proliferators from diverting nuclear material for nuclear weapons and help to detect, in a timely manner, diversion of this material from peaceful use. These safeguards are based on a comprehensive, interrelated system, including careful accounting for and control of nuclear material, reporting procedures, measurements and on-site inspections. The United States commends the Agency for its success in supporting this system and in applying safeguards. We reaffirm the necessity of maintaining this effectiveness while strengthening the Agency's ability to detect undeclared nuclear material and activities. Preserving and strengthening the international safeguards system is the highest priority for the United States in supporting the IAEA.

We are also pleased to note the Agency's impressive effort to intensify its work dealing with radiation sources that either have never been in or have fallen out of effective regulatory control. While many of these sources are small, posing little health or safety risk, some are larger and can pose significant risks. The Agency's effort has begun to reduce the human suffering and potential long-term health effects from orphaned radiation sources, as well as to reduce the risk that such sources could be used by terrorists as radiological weapons, with the danger of contaminating large geographic areas. However, we know that more needs to be done.

The IAEA's ability to sustain these important programmes depends on continued support from its members. The United States will continue to provide the Agency with significant financial assistance. However, in light of the events of 11 September, the United States is undertaking a careful review of both the Agency's programmes and its needs and how best to meet these needs to the fullest extent possible. We hope to complete this review soon, and we will look to other member States to be our partners in efforts to ensure that the Agency has the resources it needs to continue its important work and to adapt it to the needs of the future.

Continued progress in achieving our shared nuclear non-proliferation goals requires broad international cooperation and leadership. On behalf of my Government, I would like to thank Director General ElBaradei for his excellent report on the IAEA's work during the past year, as well as to commend the accomplishments of the Agency. We look forward to his upcoming report to the Board of Governors on means whereby the work of the Agency can be strengthened to prevent acts of terrorism involving nuclear and other radioactive materials. Just as the United Nations has been recognized for its critical role in pursuit of peace, we see the Agency as a

vital partner in our continuing journey towards international peace and security.

Mr. Ling (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): We first express our most sincere appreciation to the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, for his presentation of the IAEA 2000 annual report. We consider this document, which is as comprehensive as usual, a valuable contribution to enhancing the international community's awareness of the important work carried out by the Agency for international peace and security, as well as social and economic progress.

Belarus is a fully fledged member of the Agency, and has invariably and consistently supported the role that the Agency continues to play in order to provide for the effective maintenance and consolidation of the nuclear non-proliferation regimes, as well as the establishment of a reliable system of safeguards for existing atomic power plants and nuclear technologies.

My delegation takes this opportunity to re-emphasize the full commitment of the Republic of Belarus to fulfil all its international obligations in these areas. We appreciate the assistance and support that we receive from the IAEA for their effective fulfilment.

Overcoming the consequences of the disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant has a special role in the cooperation between Belarus and the IAEA. We note with appreciation that today, 15 years after the accident, the Agency continues to pay a great deal of attention to this problem. Practical evidence of this attention is a number of important projects on studying, mitigating and minimizing the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, implemented in my country with the Agency's assistance. We hope that in the course of its future work in this area the Agency will strive to develop and implement innovative approaches to international cooperation on Chernobyl, in accordance with the provisions of the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

In this context, the Republic of Belarus noted with great interest what the Director General said at the recent forty-fifth regular session of the IAEA General Conference, and in our present deliberations, about the possibility of establishing a single international consultative mechanism to collect and analyse data on the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, and about measures that are being taken, or could be taken, to overcome these consequences. This idea deserves further comprehensive, detailed international consideration, taking into account the views expressed by all interested stakeholders, above all with regard to providing for the further sustainable development of affected regions.

Mr. Krokhmal (Ukraine): The delegation of Ukraine congratulates Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei on his reappointment as Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and commends him for submitting the annual report of the Agency and his introduction concerning its current activities.

The four fundamental areas of the Agency's expertise — technology, nuclear safety, verification and technical cooperation — make it a unique international body, combining technological objectives for development and nuclear non-proliferation safeguards tools. The strengthening of safeguards has received a qualitatively new input. Last year the Agency was able to evaluate and provide broad assurances of no diversion and no indication of the presence of undeclared nuclear material or activities at the facilities in the seven States having both a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol. We are concerned that 50 States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remain without a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the Agency.

Ukraine views the universal application of the safeguards system as a cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime. We call upon those States that have not yet done so to conclude or bring into force a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the Agency without delay. That would speed up progress in achieving the goals of the 2000 NPT Review Conference and consolidate the non-proliferation regime at large.

The forty-fifth IAEA General Conference once again proved that the member States of the Agency remain committed to working together in promoting the peaceful application of nuclear energy for sustainable development. Having shut down the Chernobyl nuclear power plant last December, Ukraine contributed considerably to strengthening the global nuclear safety regime.

At the same time, the follow-up actions regarding the decommissioning of the three reactors at the site, as well as the shelter, require the immediate and concerted efforts of the world community. Ukraine greatly

welcomes an initiative to establish a common forum on the consequences of Chernobyl, which the Director General mentioned in his statement. I believe that the Agency will have a central role to play in such a forum.

The Agency, with its nuclear technology component, helps its member States to resolve urgent development issues. Many member States see nuclear power as their primary alternative energy source and as a way to ensure sustainable development. Ukraine views the further development of its nuclear power sector as being inalienably connected with international safety standards applied at operational nuclear power plants and those under construction.

Ukraine welcomes the Agency's efforts to strengthen nuclear safety and radioactive waste safety and measures to improve international cooperation on transport safety, education and training, and IAEA technical cooperation activities. At the IAEA's forty-fifth General Conference, the Ukrainian delegation was pleased to note that the Agency has continued to effectively carry out these activities despite serious budget constraints.

The threat of global terrorism has underlined the importance of physical protection, accounting and nuclear non-proliferation measures to prevent entities from acquiring and converting nuclear materials and technologies. We fully share the Secretary-General's view that, while the world was unable to prevent the 11 September attacks, we can do much to help prevent future terrorist acts carried out with weapons of mass destruction. The international community should take full account of the greatest immediate danger, which might arise from a non-State group, or even an individual, acquiring and using a nuclear, biological or chemical weapon.

Ukraine has been an enthusiastic supporter of resolution GC(45)/RES/14 "Measures to improve the security of nuclear materials and other radioactive materials", adopted by the IAEA General Conference in such a timely manner. The resolution emphasizes the importance of physical protection of nuclear material to prevent its illicit use and the sabotage of nuclear facilities and nuclear materials. We hope that the Agency will embark on a thorough review of the relevant programmes to identify further measures to enhance the security of nuclear materials and facilities.

An important step in moving towards the goal of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is, of course, the introduction of a global database based on publicly available materials on acts, threatened acts or suspected acts of terrorism involving such weapons. We are pleased to note that the Department for Disarmament Affairs is collaborating with the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in the development of approaches to carry out this task.

In conclusion, we look forward to the adoption of a comprehensive resolution on the agenda item under discussion, and hope that the General Assembly will be able to adopt by consensus the draft resolution on the report of the IAEA to demonstrate its continued support for the Agency, which is a key organization in the promotion and application of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to inform Members that a draft resolution will be submitted at a future date under this agenda item.

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Al-Kadhe (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation wishes to exercise its right of reply in order to respond to some references in the statement made by the representative of Australia.

Before making our observations, we must congratulate Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), on his report. We would also like to express our appreciation for the IAEA's efforts in the area of nuclear non-proliferation.

The representative of Australia referred to my country on the subject of nuclear disarmament measures and related Security Council resolutions. We would like to clarify the following points:

First, we draw attention to the reports of the IAEA submitted to the Security Council on 8 October 1997 (S/1997/779) and on 7 October 1998 (S/1998/927). The latter states, in paragraph 17:

> "There is no evidence that there is any capability in Iraq to produce nuclear material in a manner that could be used for armaments. In February 1994, the Agency completed its work in removing all nuclear weapons for armaments purposes in Iraq, particularly fuel for research-reactors that were subject to the safeguards of the Agency."

Secondly, we would like to draw attention to the following statement by Mr. Scott Ritter, chairman of the inspection teams in charge of removing all weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, which appeared in the June 2000 issue of the magazine *Arms Control Today*:

> "By the end of 1998, Iraq had, in fact, been disarmed, to a level unprecedented in modern history, but UNSCOM and the Security Council were unable — and in some instances unwilling — to acknowledge this accomplishment."

Thirdly, in general, the Special Committee of UNSCOM had very clearly and unambiguously adopted an approach that could be described as one of raising obstacles and creating crises over matters that had nothing to do with disarmament or with their dossiers. That approach had begun to appear in the autumn of 1998, with a view to perpetuating the embargo against Iraq, in spite of Iraq's many efforts, by which it had materially and qualitatively upheld its obligations in accordance with the different issues within the competence of the Special Committee, as we have previously stated.

Lastly, I would like to draw the attention of delegates to the need to consider objectively the issue of disarmament in Iraq, without being influenced by the political whims of certain countries attempting to act according to their political interests. Iraq has spared no effort in fulfilling the obligations imposed on it in the hope that that would lead the Security Council to adopt a position consistent with its clear obligations towards Iraq, as mentioned in the Council's own resolutions.

The representative of Australia referred to my country. I would like to draw his attention to the fact that Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei stated a short time ago, while presenting the Agency's report, that a team from the Agency had visited Iraq for the second year in a row to verify the existence of any nuclear material. Iraq complies with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and cooperates with the Agency in accordance with the safeguards agreement between Iraq and the Agency. Therefore, I would like to state that the reference to my country made by the representative of Australia lacks objectivity.

Mr. An Myong Hun (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): My delegation would like to respond to statements by some delegations with regard to the safeguard agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency. The so-called nuclear issue has been originated with the aim of stifling our country against the background of the international political situation prevailing in the early 1990s. It is, in essence, the product of the hostile policy of the United States towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The issue of safeguard agreements will automatically be resolved when the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States agreed framework reached in 1994 is implemented and the hostile relation between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States is eased. However, the United States does not implement the agreed framework in good faith. The project for the construction of light water reactors scheduled to be completed by 2003 now stands at only ground excavation. The fate of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and United States agreed framework depends on the will and stance of the United States side. If Japan and South Korea are to take a fair approach to this issue, they would have to urge the United States to implement the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and United States agreed framework in good faith.

Programme of work

The Acting President: Before adjourning the meeting, I should like to inform members that a draft resolution under this agenda item will be submitted at a future date.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.